

Message Text

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ORIGIN NEA-12

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMCONSUL HONG KONG

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 070957

TODEP 43

E. O. 11652 GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PK

SUBJECT: PAK AMBASSADOR CALLS ON DEPSEC

1. PAKISTAN AMBASSADOR SULTAN KHAN PAID BRIEF COURTESY CALL ON DEPUTY SECRETARY APRIL 11. CONNORS (D) AND HOLMES (PAB) SAT IN.

2. SULTAN KHAN EXPRESSED PERSONAL PLEASURE THAT DEP SEC WOULD SOON BE VISITING PAKISTAN. HE HOPED DEPSEC WOULD HAVE SUFFICIENT TIME IN SOUTH ASIAN STOPS TO FORM OWN IMPRESSIONS AND THAT DEPSEC WOULD FIND A FUTURE OPPORTUNITY TO DISCUSS VISIT TO PAKISTAN, INDIA, AND BANGLADESH.

3. DEPSEC TOOK NOTE OF ENACTMENT OF NEW CONSTITUTION AND EXTENDED HIS CONGRATULATIONS. IN HIS OPINION, HE SAID OVERWHELMING APPROVAL BY ALL PARTIES WAS PARTICULARLY FORTUNATE AS IT PLACES RESPONSIBILITY ON ALL TO SEE THAT CONSTITUTION WORKS WELL. PRESIDENT BHUTTO DESERVES TO BE ESPECIALLY COMPLIMENTED, HE SAID, ADDING THAT HE
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LOOKS FORWARD TO THE OPPORTUNITY TO MEET HIM.

4. TURNING TO POW ISSUE, SULTAN KHAN SAID IT WAS QUOTE ONE THING HANGING FIRE UNQUOTE AND THE MAJOR THREAT TO ESTABLISHMENT OF PEACE IN REGION. IN REPLY TO DEPSEC'S COMMENTS THAT USG VIEWED POWS AS ESSENTIALLY

HUMANITARIAN ISSUE WHICH WE HOPEFUL COULD SOON BE RESOLVED, SULTAN KHAN SAID IT NO LONGER HUMANITARIAN ISSUE BUT POLITICAL ONE. HE SAID GOP HAS NO INDICATION GOI OR BDG READY TO TAKE INITIATIVE ON POW REPATRIATION. IN HIS OPINIO HAKSAR VISIT TO DACCA WAS NOTHING MORE THAN ATTEMPT TO DIVERT MOUNTING PUBLIC OPINION AND WAS CARRIED OUT ONLY FOR APPEARANCE'S SAKE. IT UNFORTUNATE, HE ASSERTED, BUT AS ISSUE IS PROLONGED IT CAN ONLY STRENGTHEN HAND OF THOSE IN PAKISTAN WHO OPPOSE RECONCILIATION WITH INDIA. DEPSEC AGREED THAT FURTHER DELAY, ON REPATRIATION BENEFITS NO ONE AND EXPRESSED HOPE GOI, BDG, AND GOP CAN NOW GET ON WITH PROCESS OF NEGOTIATIONS. ROGERS

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*** Current Handling Restrictions *** n/a

*** Current Classification *** CONFIDENTIAL

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